

Message Text

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45

ACTION PM-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 MC-02 SS-14 L-03 NSC-10 CIAE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 GAC-01 SAJ-01 AID-20

IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01 EB-11 /111 W
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R 260830 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7769

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1051

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PO

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE DESIRE TO ACQUIRE P-3 AIRCRAFT

1. SUMMARY: PORTUGUESE MOD LONG INTERESTED IN P-3' S FOR PAF SEEKING GUIDANCE FROM MAAG/ LISBON ON ACQUISITION OF AIRCRAFT. IN LIGHT PRESUMED UNAVAILABILITY FROM EXCESS REDISTRIBUTION AND IMPROBABILITY OF SUPPLY THROUGH GRANT- AID, EMBASSY SUGGESTS MOD BE INFORMED THAT SUPPLYING P-3' S THROUGH MAP IS NOT FEASIBLE. REQUEST DEPARTMENT' S COMMENTS. END SUMMARY

2. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAS INFORMALLY APPROACHED MAAG IN CONNECTION WITH GOP WISH TO OBTAIN P-3 ASW AIRCRAFT. SPECIFICALLY, MOD OFFICIAL ASKED FOR ADVICE ON MAKING FORMAL APPROACH TO USG, ADDING THAT GOP WOULD BE UNABLE FINANCE ACQUISITION WHICH WOULD THEREFORE HAVE TO BE ARRANGED THROUGH MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

3. THIS ISSUE GOES BACK TO 1969, WHEN GOP INTEREST IN P3 WAS SPARKED BY PARIS AIR SHOW. IN 1969 AND 1970, LOCKHEED- CALIFORNIA REPRESENTATIVES VISITED LISBON, AND IN OCTOBER 1970 PROVIDED DETAILED BRIEFING ON P-3 TO PORTUGUESE AIRFORCE. IN MARCH 1971, LOCKHEED- CALIFORNIA PREPARED ANALYSIS OF USEFULNESS OF P-3 TO GOP ASW NEEDS. SINCE THAT TIME GOP HAS STATED ANNUALLY IN DPQ REPLY THAT IT WISHED TO OBTAIN P-3' S UNDER MAP.
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GIVEN PRESENT AND PREDICTABLE MAP LEVELS, QUESTION HAS BEEN IN ABEYANCE DUE HIGH COST (\$6.5 MILLION EACH) OF AIRCRAFT.

4. IMPROVED ASW CAPABILITY WOULD AUGMENT PORTUGAL'S NATO CONTRIBUTION SUBSTANTIALLY. HOWEVER, THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF P-3'S WOULD REQUIRE A REORDERING OF PAF PRIORITIES TO MAKE AVAILABLE MANPOWER AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES. WE DOUBT PAF WOULD BE WILLING OR ABLE TO DO THIS, WHICH WOULD DEGRADE THEIR EFFORTS IN AFRICAN WARS. IN ANY CASE, WE UNDERSTAND IT UNLIKELY THAT P-3'S WOULD BE AVAILABLE EITHER FROM NEW PURCHASES OR EXCESS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

5. GIVEN THE UNAVAILABILITY FROM EXCESS REDISTRIBUTION AND IMPROBABILITY OF SUPPLY THROUGH GRANT- AID EMBASSY PROPOSES THAT GOP MOD OFFICIAL BE INFORMED THAT SUPPLYING P-3'S SIMPLY OUT OF THE QUESTION, HEADING OFF THIS REQUEST BEFORE IT APPEARS FORMALLY.

6. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS.
POST

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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